

A Bet

A Better Approach to Internet Marketing and SEO

WHY MOST SMALL BUSINESSES FAIL... AT ONLINE MARKETING

UNDERSTAND

UNDERSTANDING ONLINE LEAD GENERATION FOR SMALL BUSINESS



AL BAIOCCHI
AUTHOR

Why Most Small Businesses Fail...at Online Marketing

UNDERSTANDING SEO & ONLINE LEAD GENERATION FOR SMALL BUSINESS

Before we get started down this road, let's make one thing perfectly clear; we are not picking on business owners and we are certainly not singling out small businesses as a group. The title of this eBook is merely a play on words to get your attention about a very important subject: **SEO, Online Marketing and Online Lead Generation for Small Businesses**. While we will be discussing some of the challenges of online marketing for small businesses, the basic ideas, suggestions and strategies hold true for any type or size of business in any business vertical.

HOW SMALL BUSINESS LEAD GENERATION HAS CHANGED

Years ago, when someone needed a product or service they would have asked for a referral from a business associate, their accountant, banker, financial planner, neighbor or friend. This type of referral is called a "warm market" lead.

Warm market leads can be people you already know, individuals that already know you or people that have been referred to you by someone that you know. Making a sale to or doing business with a warm market lead is much easier than selling to a cold market lead. Warm market leads are the people with whom you have already established some level of trust, either directly or indirectly via referral.

Warm market leads are great, but there is a downside. In the case of most small businesses, warm market leads eventually diminish over time and, if you are looking to grow your business, you must expand your lead generation strategies to include cold markets. **One way to do this is with Digital Marketing.**

Digital marketing is a broad term that refers to various strategies and techniques deployed to reach customers via digital technologies. It includes a variety services and marketing tactics that use the Internet as its main promotional medium.



Digital marketing is often times used synonymously with the terms “Internet Marketing” or “Online Marketing”, but in actuality the processes differ in the fact that digital marketing is considered to be more targeted, measurable and interactive.

Internet marketing encompasses digital marketing services such as organic search engine optimization, local SEO, local “long tail” search marketing, inbound marketing, social media, lead generation, content marketing and email marketing.

Employing digital marketing strategies for your small business is one way of driving targeted traffic to your website and dramatically increasing your cold market lead generation.

SOME MARKETING STATISTICS THAT SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS NEED TO KNOW

Recent studies show that approximately 85% of consumers researched a product or service online before making a decision to make a purchase. This percentage is an average of a variety of different product categories and service specialties. And while so many small business owners continue to be skeptical about or hesitant to employ online marketing and SEO strategies, this type of data is significant and simply cannot be ignored.

Below is a summary of aggregated research that provides a startling look at marketing data that should be considered by any small business as they develop their online marketing initiatives:

96% of people seeking information about a product or service use a search engine.

87% of people who contact a small business go on to purchase from or hire them.

85% use online maps to find product or service locations.

75% of prospects beginning a search online end up contacting the small business via telephone.

74% of consumers visit a small business’s website before taking action.

71% of people looking for a product or service feel it is important to buy from a local company.

69% use both a smartphone and a PC for research.

62% of Internet searches are non-branded (i.e. “Best Home Care Agency Lake Forest IL”)

31% of all small business related website traffic comes through mobile search

25% of people researching product or service topics visit YouTube during the process.

These numbers don’t lie, but if you’re still skeptical and are not convinced that other small businesses (i.e. your competitors) are devoting marketing resources to enhance their online exposure and get their websites in front of prospective customers, here’s a little test. Google your product or service in the city where your office is located (i.e. “best divorce lawyer in chicago” or “24 hour live in caregivers provo utah”) and look at the search results. Do you see your website or the websites of your competitors?

[Best Chicago Divorce Lawyer- How to find the best divorce attorney in ...](https://www.chicagofamilylawyer.com/best-chicago-divorce-lawyer/)

<https://www.chicagofamilylawyer.com/best-chicago-divorce-lawyer/> ▼

Many of these prospective clients will ask "I Need the Best Divorce Lawyer in Chicago, Who Should I Call?" Fortunately for us, our firm is recommended quite.

[Top Divorce Lawyers in Chicago - How can I find the divorce lawyer ...](https://www.chicagofamilylawyer.com/top-divorce-lawyers-in-chicago/)

<https://www.chicagofamilylawyer.com/top-divorce-lawyers-in-chicago/> ▼

Attorney Referral – When searching for the best Divorce Lawyer in Chicago, a great option would be to consult with a local attorney that you trust and is familiar ...

Now, we understand that the simple fact that your competitors are “doing something” to outrank you is not necessarily a good enough reason for you open your checkbook and jump in head first into the online marketing arena. But what you do have to realize is the fact that you are not only missing out on new client leads in the short term; in fact, you are setting yourself up for long term failure online by ignoring an entire generation of individuals, business owners and young executives (all prospective clients) who are potentially in the market for your products or services that are intelligent, knowledgeable and savvy enough to use the Internet as their primary source of information. These individuals conduct a majority of their research online, from locating the best Home Care Agency in Chicago’s North Shore suburbs to finding a Custom Plastic Extrusion company for their next point-of-purchase display project. It’s this generation that is, and will be, your target market in the future and it’s naive to think that they are not devoting the same amount of time researching a specific product or service prior to making a commitment to purchase.

IS BIGGER BETTER WHEN IT COMES TO SMALL BUSINESS SEO?

Here's the simple truth: Digital Marketing and Search Engine Optimization (SEO) are among the most over-hyped marketing “tactics” in most industries. There are tons of “mega providers” that will have you believe that they can provide you with the best web presence and successfully market your small business online. We won’t mention any names, but you all know the companies we are talking about. You probably get bombarded with phone calls and emails from these companies every week until they “hook” you. They all have the same *modus operandi*, they develop “template” style websites for thousands of small businesses and claim that they can get your company ranked on “The First Page of Google”.

Really? Let’s think about this for a minute...

While some of these mega providers may be marginally successful in achieving some level of organic ranking for a select group of their clients (i.e. generally premium users that pay big \$\$\$) and for non-competitive search phrases in very small markets, a vast majority of their clients fail to reach their online potential for the simple fact that there are only 10 organic ranking spots on the first page of Google for any singular search query. **If you have 20 dental practice clients in Metro Chicago that you are providing online marketing and SEO services for, how can you achieve page one ranking for all of them for the targeted search phrase “Best Cosmetic Dentist in Chicago”? Answer: You can’t!** And chances are they aren’t even getting one of their clients on page one of Google for competitive keywords and phrases in a competitive geographic market.

A BETTER APPROACH TO INTERNET MARKETING AND SEO FOR SMALL BUSINESS

A better approach to online marketing and SEO for your small business would be to find a highly respected, experienced SEO firm that can provide you with client references and current data that displays and supports their SEO abilities in action. We are not talking about non-competitive keywords in small markets – anyone can do that. We mean national campaign ranking and competitive geographic search prominence over an extended period of time.

Another consideration would be to ask the SEO organization if they accept more than one client from within the same business vertical in the same targeted geographic area. **Our firm does not.** If you are an HVAC contractor in Kansas City and we manage your online marketing and SEO, we will not accept another HVAC company in your targeted geographic territory. We know that this is bad for our business, but extremely good for our clients. For us it's a matter of integrity and principal. If you hire us to provide best-in-class SEO for your business, wouldn't you be disappointed, even angry, if you found out that we are providing the same service for 5, 10 or 20 of your competitors? Unfortunately, that's exactly what many other small business SEO service providers do.

For most small businesses today, SEO is the marketing expenditure that has the highest potential ROI. The benefits it can provide far exceed the value of other marketing approaches – direct mail, broadcast advertising, print advertising, online ads, etc.

WHAT CAN I DO TO GROW MY BUSINESS AND GENERATE NEW CLIENT LEADS?

The world of marketing has changed dramatically over the past decade. The Internet has revolutionized the way consumers make decisions about almost every aspect of their lives, from dating to shopping to what brand of shoes to buy. Businesses of all types, including small businesses, have had to make important changes to the way they attract potential customers and clients. Internet marketing offers a way for business professionals to harness the power of the web to maximize exposure, drive targeted traffic and enhance new client lead generation.

A basic definition of internet marketing is any online marketing effort or strategy that leverages the Internet as its platform. It includes your business website, search engine optimization, local search marketing, social media outreach, pay-per-click and display advertising, email marketing, as well as other technologies. This kind of marketing is entirely digital and can be part of a larger marketing plan that includes traditional offline marketing tactics.

DEFINING YOUR TARGET MARKET AND UNDERSTANDING THEIR NEEDS

Many online marketing agencies will tell you that your target audience is the group of people most likely to need your company's products or services. We respectfully disagree. ***Your target market is those individuals that need your products or services and can afford to pay for them.*** After all generating a bunch of leads from people that need your products or services, but have no way to pay for them, would be a fruitless endeavor. Successful internet marketing starts with understanding what would attract your target audience to your small business's website and then drive them to take action (call, email or purchase).

MAKE SURE THAT YOUR WEBSITE HAS THE RIGHT MARKETING MESSAGE

A recent study found that 93% of consumers in the U.S. use the Internet to search for products and services. Since your website is the first point of contact that many prospective clients will have with your business, your website needs to grab their attention, instill confidence and ultimately drive them to contact you to help solve their problems.

So how do you attract people to your website, and keep them there?

As a small business owner you understand that the resources you dedicate to promoting your business must deliver measurable results. You know that you want to grow your business, but the big question is "how". Small businesses need a powerful web presence that addresses the concerns of clients and prospects, while delivering

valuable information in a way that instills confidence, presents your company as the “expert in your field” and drives your visitors to take action.

Initially, many business owners contact us to either design a new website or help market their practice online. Somehow, they feel that the two are mutually exclusive from one another. For example, they will consider building a new website, but, at the same time, they’re not at all thinking about how that new website will generate traffic and leads. What seems to consistently be misunderstood is the fact that you really can’t separate Web Development from Online Marketing and expect to be successful online. Each needs to be built with the other in mind and work in sync to achieve your marketing goals. It doesn’t do much good to generate a bunch of traffic to a website if the messaging fails to convert the prospects into buyers, subscribers or leads.

By first creating an impressive online image and then generating traffic and leads through proven marketing strategies, we not only help you increase revenues, but we also build substantial long term brand loyalty.

You might be wondering what makes for really good local business website design?

The best small business websites focus on a specific target audience, contain compelling content, include strong calls to action and eliminates distractions, like annoying graphics and unnecessary images. This is not to say that the best small business website designs don’t look attractive, they absolutely do, but the emphasis should not be solely on design, but rather a combination of esthetics, architecture, layout, quality content and other features and functionalities designed to convert visitors into customers.

Local and regional businesses need a powerful web presence that addresses the concerns of customers and prospects, while delivering valuable information in a way that instills confidence, presents your company as the “expert in your field” and drives your visitors to take action.

Unlike many online “mega-providers” and “website factories”, we don’t believe in a “one size fits all” approach to website design which means we take time to learn about your business. We get to know your history, staff, products or services provided, types of clients you serve and, maybe most importantly, what your plans and aspirations are for future growth. It’s not until we understand the inner workings of your organization that we get to work building a website that is perfectly reflective of your local business along with developing a strategic online marketing plan that will help you succeed online.

ONLINE MARKETING 101 FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

STEP #1 WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

WEBSITE DESIGN IS A CRITICAL FIRST STEP TO ONLINE SUCCESS, BUT WHERE DO YOU BEGIN?

With so many options to consider, how do you know that you’re making the right choice that is going to establish the best online presence for your small business?

Online success starts with a great website design and you should strive to find balance between creative design, site functionality, user experience and search engine optimization.

SUCCESSFUL WEB DESIGN STARTS WITH PLANNING

Just like with any large project your company might handle, the web design process begins with a discovery phase. Prior to creating the first design mock up, we'll closely examine your target market, existing website, content for the new site, marketing objectives and developmental requirements.

The website planning process consists of organizing all of your ideas, your objectives, and coming up with a development plan and timeline that will fulfill these requirements while remaining within budget.

DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

Based on the mock-ups created during the planning phase, our designers begin the process of creating unique interfaces that not only support your branding efforts, but are also effective at engaging your online visitors and enhancing your online exposure. Our talented team does not look at your project solely from a design or development perspective. They are trained to look at each client's project from a business and lead generation perspective, where ROI is a key metric.

Once designs are finalized for the website's front-end interface, our development team goes to work. They code the website page, and then depending on the scope of the project, may add a Content Management System (CMS).

RESPONSIVE WEBSITE DESIGN

Desktop . Tablet . Mobile – One Site for Every User

Responsive Web Design is an approach whereby a web developer creates a web page or website that “responds to” or re-sizes itself depending on the type of device it is being viewed on. That could be an oversized desktop computer monitor, a laptop, a 10-inch tablet, a 7-inch tablet, or a 4-inch smartphone screen.

In other words, with a responsive website design, you don't have to have worry about having different websites for various devices or making sure that your site displays and functions properly on a mobile device.

WHAT DOES A RESPONSIVE WEBSITE LOOK LIKE?

Responsive Web design has become one of the hottest trends in web development. This is due in part to the growth of smartphone usage and other internet-connected mobile devices. More people are using smaller devices to view Web pages than ever before and if you are looking to maximize your online brand interaction, you should consider a responsive website for your organization.



STEP #2 DIGITAL MARKETING

HELPING SMALL BUSINESSES GROW THEIR ONLINE PRESENCE THROUGH DIGITAL MARKETING.

Digital marketing is a broad term that refers to various strategies and techniques deployed to reach consumers via digital technologies. It includes a variety of services and marketing tactics that use the Internet as its main promotional medium.

Digital marketing is often times used synonymously with the term “Internet Marketing”, but in actuality the processes differ in the fact that digital marketing is considered to be more targeted, measurable and interactive.

Internet marketing encompasses digital marketing services such as organic search engine optimization, local SEO, inbound marketing, social media, lead generation, content marketing and email marketing.

ONLINE MARKETING SERVICES TO HELP YOUR ORGANIZATION GROW

Effective online marketing is the result of strategic integration of multiple on-page and off-page strategies to enhance visibility, drive targeted traffic, engage website visitors and increase revenue. FrontPage Interactive is based in Chicago and specializes in Web Design & Development, Online Marketing, Inbound Marketing, Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and Content Marketing.

Our experienced team of digital marketing professionals manages online marketing initiatives for clients across the country and in nearly all business verticals. The process begins with an online marketing discovery phase to better understand your business, your products and services, target market and conversion goals so we can develop a customized online marketing campaign for your organization.



ORGANIC SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

Your website's primary purpose may be to promote your products or services, generate qualified leads, develop brand awareness for your company or to serve as a marketing or recruiting tool for your organization.

But let's face it, regardless of your site's primary goal; if people can't find it easily on Google, Bing, Yahoo or any other major search engine, you are not maximizing its potential or effectiveness.

Organic Search Engine Optimization improves search ranking, develops website authority and enhances your overall online presence so your business can get found, engage prospects and acquire new client leads.

STRATEGIC SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION CAN HELP YOU ACHIEVE THE ROI YOU DESERVE, BY

1. IMPROVING YOUR SEARCH ENGINE RANKINGS

"Internet search engines account for over 85% of all new visitors to a website."

If your prospects can't find your website, they can't purchase your products or services. Make it easy for them by making your site 'search engine friendly' and optimize your website for the search engines.

2. DRIVING "TARGETED TRAFFIC" TO YOUR WEBSITE

"It's not about the number of visitors your site receives; it's the number of targeted visitors."

A million visitors to your website that have no interest in your product or service is an absolute waste of your time and effort.

However 1000, 500, 100 or even 10 targeted visitors that are truly interested in the products, services or information you have to offer on your website can be invaluable and a critical component to your success online.

We make sure that you're reaching your target audience by focusing on keyword phrases and strategies that will maximize your online exposure and drive **targeted traffic to your small business website**.

3. CONVERTING LEADS INTO DOLLARS

"A visitor is just a visitor, unless you can convert them to a buyer, subscriber or lead."

All websites have a "primary" purpose; whether it's providing information, gathering information, attracting investors, delivering your brand message, soliciting donations, obtaining subscriptions, generating qualified sales leads or actually selling your products or services online.

Whatever your website's purpose is, once you've attracted a 'targeted' visitor, you will want to do everything that you can to drive them to take action. After all, isn't that why you have a website?

LOCAL SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

The importance of Search Engine Optimization for Local Businesses (Local SEO) has grown significantly over the last several years with the sharp rise of internet connected smartphone usage. Local SEO focuses on providing search results that are relevant to Internet users based on their specific geographic location. If you search for

“best sushi restaurant” on your office desktop or tablet PC right now, Google would display results that are the most relevant and are geographically close to where your office is physically located. You would also expect those search results to vary if you were using your smartphone and conducting the same search query from your home.

To address the local nature of today’s search engine results, business owners need to optimize their web presence and tailor search strategies by geographic location to enhance local exposure, drive targeted local traffic and maximize sales and lead generation.



Are you a local or regional small business that provides your products or services to consumers or clients in a specific geographic area? Are you struggling to attract targeted website visitors from the right locations?

Whether you’re a local or regional business that relies on targeting website traffic from specific geographic locations (neighborhoods, cities, towns, counties, states, territories, etc.), it’s extremely important that you understand that the traffic being driven to your website is the type of traffic that is valuable to your local business.

What is Local SEO and How Does it Work?

Local SEO involves a combination of various on-page and off-page organic SEO strategies that we have developed to maximize the traffic to your website from prospects in your specified marketing areas.

By using location-specific strategies we can effectively target local prospects in the geographic areas that are most important to your business. When these prospects use search words and phrases to find local businesses, they will find your website instead of your competitor.

INBOUND MARKETING

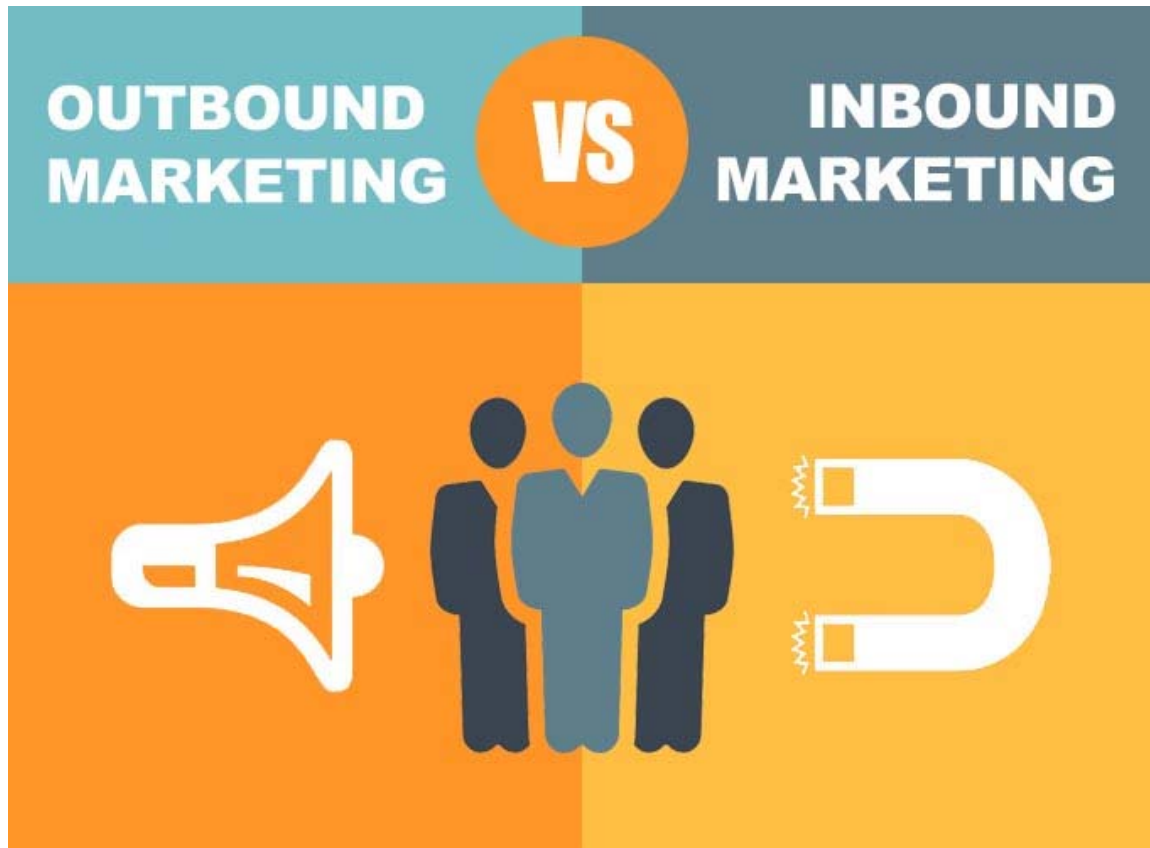
Inbound marketing refers to marketing strategies that bring visitors in, rather than you having to go out to get the attention of a prospective client, customer or lead.

Inbound marketing earns the attention of consumers, makes your company stand out from the crowd, be easily found online and drives targeted traffic to your website by producing interesting, relevant content.

This is in direct contrast to outbound marketing, where marketers attempt to go “out” and find customers.

By aligning your online marketing strategy with your prospect's interests, you'll begin to organically attract laser targeted traffic that you can convert to a buyer, client, subscriber or lead.

How Does Inbound Marketing Work?



Consumers today are bombarded with millions of marketing messages every day.

Outbound marketing methods like interruptive ads, direct mail and cold calling simply don't work any-more.

The reason is simple... Now there are all sorts of ways to block out messages you are trying to get in front of consumers and those individuals are more in control of what information they choose to receive.

Unlike traditional outbound marketing methods, like billboards, print ads, radio, television, telemarketing, etc., that interrupts and tries to get in front of as many people as possible, wherever possible, inbound marketing is about attracting qualified consumers when they are actively searching for information and answers.

Today, In order to attract potential customers, marketers have to provide them with something they find of value and enjoy.

THAT'S WHERE INBOUND MARKETING COMES IN.

It's an approach to marketing that attracts individuals to your product or service by creating quality content that consumers are actively searching for and converts them into lifelong customers.

Inbound marketing uses a variety of strategies including blogging, interactive video, social media, Search Engine Optimization and more.

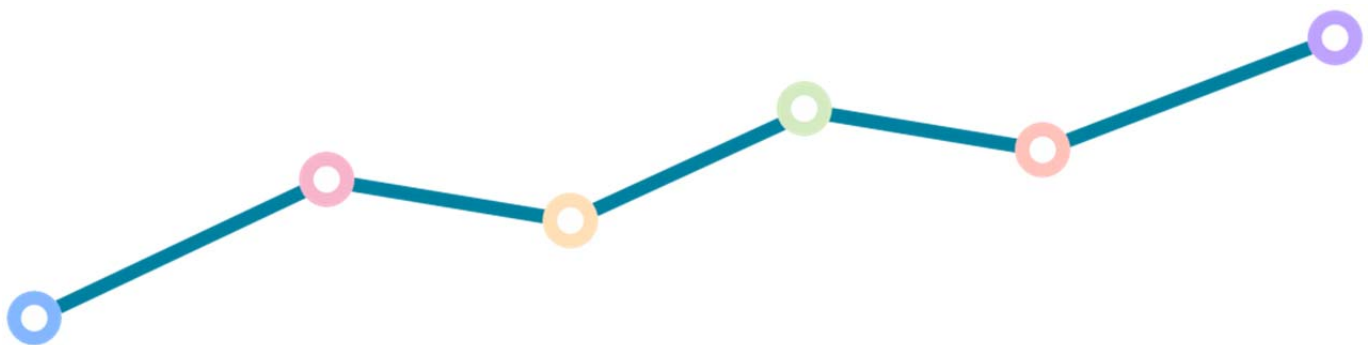
By publishing the right content in the right place at the right time, your marketing becomes relevant and helpful to your customers and prospects, you become the “expert in your field” and consumers become advocates for your brand.

Also we analyze the success of your marketing campaigns, and determine which areas need further optimizations for future success.

Inbound marketing is more effective and creates more leads than outbound marketing. It also costs less than traditional marketing methods...about 60% less. This means you spend less, but get more results!

WEB ANALYTICS & TRACKING

DETAILED DATA REPORTING THAT ALLOWS YOU TO TRACK KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS



When you make a major investment in your business website, it’s important to see results and understand which marketing strategies are working and which require focus and improvement. On the Internet, your website’s effectiveness and traffic are measured through analytics.

Website analytics is the measurement, collection, analysis and reporting of web data for purposes of understanding and optimizing website usage.

Website analytics is not just a tool for measuring website traffic but can be used as a tool for business and market research, and to assess and improve the effectiveness of a website.

Website analytics applications can also help companies measure the results of traditional print or broadcast advertising campaigns. It helps to estimate how traffic to a website can change after the launch of a new advertising campaign. Web analytics provides information about the number of visitors to a website and the number of page views. It helps gauge traffic and popularity trends which is useful for market research.

Each of our websites integrates the world’s most popular web analytics tool, Google Analytics, which allows you to track how many visitors you have, which pages they visit, how long they are on each page, which type of device they are using, where they came from, which area of your website they left from and much more. Understanding your website analytics will allow you to make informed decisions about which pages to emphasize on your website because you’ll know exactly what customers are reading and where they’re spending the most time.

MEASURE YOUR WEBSITE’S PERFORMANCE WITH ACTUAL VISITOR DATA

Website analytics plays an important role in your online marketing success. It provides detailed information that makes it possible for you to understand the behaviors and interests of your site visitors.

- Key visitor information to make your website more user-friendly
- Key insights to improve the experience of your online visitors
- Improved site performance with better understanding of visitor activity
- Information about the traffic patterns for your website, number of unique visitors, target audience location, length of visit, most viewed pages and more.

Analyzing website user data and behavior allows you to better understand your visitor's activities and lead sources and allows for incremental strategic adjustments to enhance conversion and lead generation.

HOW TO MANAGE A SMALL BUSINESS AND AN INTERNET MARKETING CAMPAIGN

The information provided above is just a small piece of the online marketing "puzzle". We know that you are feeling a bit overwhelmed right now and it may seem inconceivable for you to juggle managing a small business, working on complex projects, attending trade shows, managing your finances and marketing your business online.

You do have a few options that you can consider.

You can hire a full time marketing manager to do the work for you, or alternatively, ask some of the employees in your office to pitch in (in their spare time!). The full time marketing manager is going to have to be a highly skilled individual with expertise in a variety of marketing channels in order to be successful. Can they successfully maintain a website, manage on-page and off-page SEO needs, understand Google My Business and what needs to be done to maximize your rank in local search, utilize social media, write or outsource relevant articles for your blog or troubleshoot server-side website issues? And your employees? Let's face it; we have yet to meet an employee that had the time, energy or technical ability to manage one of these tasks, let alone all of them.

The most affordable solution would be to outsource your web development and SEO needs to a qualified Digital Marketing agency - a group of talented and dedicated professionals with a passion for web design and online marketing with exceptional skills in organic search engine optimization and local search marketing.

For most small businesses today, SEO is the marketing expenditure that has the highest potential ROI. The benefits it can provide far exceed the value of other marketing approaches – direct mail, broadcast advertising, print advertising, online ads, etc.

No longer do small businesses decide whether they need SEO services. Instead, they decide how much they're going to spend. As long as they choose a quality SEO agency, their decision should result in more targeted website traffic, increases in revenue, enhanced brand awareness, improved customer retention and more lead generation than ever before.

You can decide how much that's worth to your business.

If you are interested in learning more about marketing your small business online the right way or would like to strengthen your existing efforts, contact [FrontPage Interactive](#) today.